

HAWAIIAN ISLANDS.

Some Reasons Why the United States Should Possess Them.

PORTLAND, Jan. 4.—[TO THE EDITOR OF THE OREGONIAN.] My attention was specially attracted to news from Washington in your Tuesday morning issue, concerning the Hawaiian Islands. Having spent the months of May and June last in Honolulu and the island of Hawaii, having been present at the opening of the present legislature in Honolulu and met and conversed with many of its members, and also with a great number of the leading subjects and citizens of the kingdom, I may speak, it seems to me, with some assurance of the condition of things there, and of the future of that most interesting and beautiful cluster of Pacific islands.

Geographically, these islands are nearer to the United States (the Pacific coast) than to any other country, being 2100 miles from San Francisco, while they are more than 4000 miles removed from South America, and from Australia and New Zealand, from China, Japan, and the British South Sea and Indian possessions. They are the only available land, as a stopping place for ships north of the equator, midway, as it were, in the great Pacific ocean, in all voyages east, west, north and south. They therefore constitute, as must be obvious, a world strategic point of the very first importance, and in this respect, as seems also clear, their existence and proprietorship one of greater concern both in peace and war to the United States than to any other earthly power.

Historically, the natives of these islands, as first found by the Spanish, English and American navigators, were a barbarous, heathen people—a prehistoric migration, or branch of a migration, probably of the great Turanian or Mongolian race from Asia and the North, and identical with the Samoans, Gilbert Islanders and Maoris of New Zealand. They were, when first found, quite numerous—supposed 300,000—and of heroic type and warlike habit; but they remained barbarous and uncivilized until 1819, when permanent white Christian missions were established among them in each of the five larger islands by the Congregationalist Church of Massachusetts.

To these missions, in the main, they owe their civilization and their Christianity. Other foreign churches and educational influences have, in later time, been established there, as the Church of England, the Italian or Roman Catholic Church, and others; but none have taken the hold upon them, or so left their impress in all religious and social customs, in civil, political and economical ideas, as the New England American Congregationalists. The government, it is true, is nominally and formally a kingdom; a result which naturally came about from the supreme chieftaincy of Kamehameha I, the great warrior and conqueror of all the islands, who was in power when the missionaries landed from Boston; and this accident favored British pretensions to meddle in the islands, by opening the door for them to give instructions to the native chiefs about the proper majesty and state of a king, etc. But in spite of this monarchical form, I everywhere found the sentiment, both among the natives and foreigners, to be strongly democratic, and above all things, American. From the first, Americans were more largely settled among them than any other white foreigners; and these in the main, were of the best and most intelligent class of Americans, who have largely intermarried with the natives, and have been chiefly instrumental in civilizing them, and in organizing their social and civil institutions, and in the development of the resources of the country. Three generations of white and mixed American bloods have been born in the Islands; and they very largely hold the civil offices, occupy the Government positions, teach the schools (which is the American public school system, and in which both Hawaiian and English are taught), conduct the churches, and control the business and social interests of the kingdom in all the islands. The prevailing church in all the islands is the American Congregationalist, although none is supported by the State, and the leading natives and most of their kings and queens have been members of it.

To all intents and purposes, the Hawaiian Islands are an outlying colony and extension of New England—speaking very largely the English language, and permeated through and through with American sentiment. A most striking exemplification of this is observable everywhere, not only in the universal social, religious and educational institutions and customs of the Islands, but in the public anniversaries and holidays. On the 4th of July and on "Decoration Day" it is easy to imagine yourself to be in a state or territory of the Union. Theoretically the government is native and the language is Hawaiian, but practically it is Anglo-Saxon rule. The coin, the business methods and exchanges, the denomination of things and all the great leading interests are Californian and American.

The natives, as a matter of fact, no doubt, are jealous of their rights and of the autonomy of their government and country, and they are the more so, in view of the fact which is ever before them that their race is rapidly disappearing from the islands.

Their present number in all of the islands is thought not to exceed very much 40,000; the whole population, including natives, whites, Portuguese, Chinese, et al., being about 100,000. On an average there are five a month—mostly natives—sent to the leper colony on Molokai; this and other causes arising out of civilized conditions, which are too much for them, is rapidly sweeping out of existence a once numerous and heroic race. They are now in a high degree an interesting, lovable, pitiable and dependent people. They are, to a large extent, educated, intelligent and law abiding, and are better fitted to be citizens of the United States than the people of Mexico. They are proud of their antecedents and jealous of their native land and the government of their royal chiefs. But they are a friendly, loving hearted people, and they realize their declining condition, and they look with admiration and hope to "the Great Republic" as their helper and protector. What, then, is to be the ultimate outcome for the Hawaiian islands? It can only be—and that will be very soon—that they will be absorbed by a race and a power stronger and more lasting than they. Shall that power be England, or France, or Germany, or the United States? Every reason, every consideration, every equity of the case, both for the good of the Hawaiian people and for the future interests of this country answers: "They must be the possession of the United States."

W. H. STOR.

IS IT THE JOHN ENA?

Total Loss of a Large Ship Off the Isthmus.

By the British ship Goodrich, which arrived at San Francisco recently from Liverpool, news is received of the probable total loss of a large ship off the Isthmus of Panama. Captain Williams' report is that on the afternoon of December 27th he came up with a large iron ship in latitude 8:10 north, longitude 116:40 west. Coal smoke was issuing from the hatches, and to all appearances the fire had been burning for several days and perhaps weeks, as the abandoned vessel was so high out of the water as to betoken a considerable lessening of her cargo. The weather was squally and uncertain at the time, so that the officers of the Goodrich did not dare to approach too near. They have to for a few minutes within a mile of the burning vessel, and lowered a boat, but recalled it before any examination into the identity of the derelict had been made. Her name could not be made out, but Captain Williams thinks it consists of two words. She was about 320 feet long and would register from 2,500 to 3,000 tons. Her bowsprit was painted white, and beneath it was a figurehead which the Goodrich people took to be a representation of an East Indian rajah. Her bridge and accommodations are amidships, and her wheelhouse is of iron. After noting these identification marks and that the yards were all on deck the Goodrich resumed her voyage, making an unusually smart run to port.

SUSPECTED TO BE JOHN ENA.

Speculation here as to the identity of the burning ship generally stopped at the Hawaiian ship John Ena, a new vessel, now out 152 days from Cardiff with coal consigned to Girvin, Baldwin & Eyre. This is her maiden voyage and her peculiarities are not known here, but she corresponds to the dimensions approximated by Captain Williams, and is the only vessel which is due in that latitude. Most of the coal ships due here are well known and none of them possesses such marks as the Goodrich's report gives.—S. F. Examiner.

VOLUNTEER MILITIA.

A National Guard Composed of Three Companies Is Organized.

On Tuesday the Government Building an important event took place when three volunteer military companies were organized. Each company will probably consist of 100 men. They will be uniformed and armed with rifles and as soon as possible meeting places will be provided for the companies. They will be known as the National Guard.

Following is the list of officers: Co. A.—Capt. C. W. Ziegler; 1st Lieut., A. Gartenberg; 2d Lieut., Karl Klemme. Co. B.—Capt. Hugh Gunn; 1st Lieut., Arthur Brown; 2d Lieut., L. T. Kenake. Co. C.—Capt. J. M. Camara, Jr.; 1st Lieut., J. M. Vivas; 2d Lieut., A. G. Silva, Jr.

Mrs. Kahananui, with a few Hawaiians, is very active and earnest in circulating correct information regarding the change of government, and they find that where the facts are made known, intelligent natives all favor the change in the government.

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